

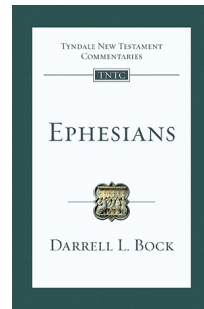
Book Review

Bock, Darrell L.
Ephesians

(*Tyndale New Testament Commentary*).

Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2019. pp. 213.

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This commentary is one of the latest contributions to the third generation of Tyndale commentaries, succeeding the previous volumes which ran from 1956-1974 and 1983-2003. This new series is not intended to supersede the previous Tyndale Commentary series, but it is rather a new corpus of commentaries that engages with recent developments in modern scholarship with an accessibility in the model of their predecessors. The commentary series has a new unified structure that divides each section into the following categories: Context, Comment, and Theology, replacing the old dreary format which are structured in blocks of commentary for every verse. This series also maintains the Evangelical ethos of their predecessors in providing exegetically rich commentary with systematically thoughtful theological concepts useful to theologians, pastors, and laymen.

Darrell Bock, who is known mostly for his scholarship on Luke-Acts and historical Jesus studies, has rarely written on Paul's letters with the exception of one small contribution on Ephesians-Colossians; however, his previous work on progressive dispensationalism, Jewish-Gentile relations, and the theology of the ascended and exalted Jesus at the right hand of God provides a refreshing reading of the letter to the Ephesians. Bock summarises this letter as 'an amazing summary of God's blessings,

his plan, the enablement believers have access to and the reconciliation God has achieved in bringing Jew and Gentile together in Christ' (p. 212). Bock's central focus in reading Ephesians is the power of God working through the exalted Messiah who sent the Holy Spirit to work in both Jews and Gentiles. This union between Jew and Gentile is also expressed in Bock's use of contemporary literature as Bock draws extensively from contemporary Jewish writings with the concept of many applications from Paul which is regarded as *halakhah*, as well as citing Greco-Roman sources providing a cultural backdrop for metaphors familiar to those living in Ephesus, such as adoption.

The structure of the analysis of Ephesians is in three sections: firstly, section 1 is given the title *Praise for God's Work in Christ and Prayer for an understanding of God's Power*, which covers chapters 1 and 2. The second section looks at chapter 3, which Bock entitles *Paul's Calling in the Mystery to Minister to the Gentles Culminates in Prayer for Strength and a Benediction of God's Capability*. The concluding section, *The Church and the World*, disseminates chapters 4-6. The overall flow of the book is helpful to pastors and preachers in breaking down the epistle into thematic sections that are pertinent for current cultural and ecclesiastical discussions.

Bock's expertise as the Executive Director of Cultural Engagement at The Hendricks Center on social issues shines through on some of topics as Ephesians requires pastoral sensitivity to some

controversial issues. Although Bock provides a theologically astute reading of Ephesians much of this commentary is ordinarily conservative in many of the talking points of Ephesians including Pauline authorship of the letter to the Ephesians and a Complementarian view of headship in the husband/wife relationship. Bock offers little to the contribution of scholarship of these areas, but he does offer sound exegetical precision to the position he takes. This, in microcosm, reflects the overall summary of this commentary as it is a solid piece of Evangelical writing.